



City of Tucson Ward 5 Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 12

May 2011

A LETTER FROM VICE MAYOR FIMBRES

FREQUENTLY USED PHONE NUMBERS

Emergency Services
TPD & TFD
DIAL 911

Permits 791-5550
Housing Assistance
791-4739

TCC - 791-5522

Code Enforcement &
Graffiti removal
792-CITY (2489)

Trash Pick up &
Environmental
Services 791-3171

Transportation &
Street Maintenance
- 791-3154

Tucson Water
Billing - 791-3242
Public Info. - 791-4331

Personal Blog at:
badger73.blogspot.com

Also online at
[Facebook.com/
richardgfimbres](https://www.facebook.com/richardgfimbres)

Dear Friends:

On May 10, the Mayor and Council by a vote of 5 to 1 gave tentative approval for the City of Tucson, Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Budget. Under Arizona law ARS §42-17105, a tentative budget needed to be approved and that the total appropriations cannot be increased.

These past two years have been very difficult because of the economic downturn that has hit everyone across the country. Everyone has felt this impact. The City of Tucson has reduced its work force by more than 1,000 positions through attrition and retirements. It is a smaller workforce, the same size it was back in 1995, trying to meet the needs of Tucson's 21st century community. In addition, more than 30 administrative and management positions were eliminated, saving more than \$3.0 million in salaries and benefits. Current employees have taken a 3.5% pay reduction by taking nine, unpaid furlough days.

This vote by the Mayor and Council for tentative approval of the proposed FY 2012 budget did not burden those who could least afford it, with a renter's tax. Small businesses who are trying to stay afloat during these tough economic times were not burdened either when the Mayor and Council rejected proposals for an advertising tax, increase in business license fees, as well as a land speculation tax.

This Mayor and Council approved increases to the rates for Sun Tran fares, effective July 1.

These actions by this current Mayor and Council are nothing new. Just eight days into my term as your Councilmember on December 15, 2009, the City Manager announced the City was facing \$33.5 million budgetary short fall for the FY 2010 budget.

This Mayor and Council dealt with that situation and started work on the FY 2011 budget, which had a projected shortfall of \$44.0 million and approved a balanced budget.

On October 5, 2010, this Mayor and Council approved the City Manager's recommendations for revenues and expenditures totaling \$8.3 million. In addition, the Mayor and Council the following week, October 13, approved a further half-million dollars, in budgetary reductions to outside agencies.

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Help those who are in need. Give to the Community food Bank. For more information, call 520-622-0525

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The first action for the FY 2012 occurred during the study session of the Mayor and Council meeting of December 14, 2010. This Mayor and Council, unanimously approved recommendations made to reduce the police and fire budgets (7.5% and 6.7%), so that no active police and firefighters were laid off and no stations were closed. Both the police and firefighter union's helped to draft and supported these budgetary proposals. The budget's for both public service departments make up close to 62%, more than \$236 million of the FY 2012 general fund budget, totaling \$423 million.

Arizona's Legislature also had a hand in the budgetary process when they swept more than \$10 million in LTAf funding for roads, as well as \$69 million in state shared revenue for the past two fiscal years.

Despite these gathering "storm clouds," this Mayor and Council took positive action to help encourage businesses and economic growth for Tucson.

Thanks to your Councilmember and current Vice Mayor, Tucson's Certificates of Occupancy requirements were simplified and streamlined. Other changes made by the Mayor and Council include rewriting the Land Use Code, changing the rules for business signs and for parking space requirements.

These changes resulted in more than \$200 million in commercial construction and development permits being taken out for projects in the City of Tucson since these new proposals went into effect in August 2010.

Construction on the Unisource building is going on downtown, and in record time, the Family Dollar Store on 22nd Street and the Bridges Project development in Ward 5, which got off to a great start with the opening of the new Costco Store.

Further construction for the City of Tucson will be the Modern Streetcar Project, which benefits the entire city but not on the city's "dime," thanks to secured grants from the federal government.

In addition, this Mayor and Council made decisions, changing course from previous actions from previous Mayor and Council's, so that city government can meet the needs during these current times.

My office brought forward a measure to allow Sun Tran to have more advertising on the inside and outside of their buses, as well as their fare guides, ticket passes and any other materials. This measure will help in cost recovery for the fare box and to alleviate the general fund expenditure for the bus service.

Sun Tran is also saving money through Mayor and Council directed utilization of the procurement card (P-Card), for their transactions and vendor payments – a potential savings of up to \$300,000. In addition, with the lifting of the restrictions on advertising on Sun Tran buses, six buses will have the bus wraps, to the tune of more than \$100,000.

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The City of Tucson's use of the procurement card (P-Card) process is being expanded by city departments for their purchases of materials or payments, potentially saving the tax-payers in the millions of dollars.

Case in point, the City of Tucson Finance Department reported that they could be issuing 75,000 checks for vendor services alone. With the cost of transactions (staff time, printing, mailing, issuance) totaling \$92.00 (per check) under the present system and the P-Card cost a little more than \$20.00, the potential savings of roughly \$5.5 million could happen for one department. The possibilities are endless and will benefit the most important person, you - the taxpayer.

Parks and Recreation are now able to solicit advertising and sponsorships thanks to the Mayor and Council approving the proposal my office brought forward to repeal the restrictions that were in the City Code - another potential revenue stream to help preserve Parks and Recreation programs and services while alleviating the general fund expenditure.

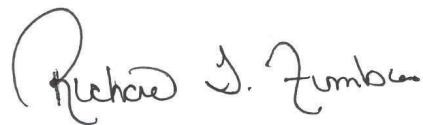
Contrary to what has been reported, the City of Tucson has a debt restructuring for \$9.5 million in the spring of 2012. That is if the land sales do not come through. Presently, there are a couple of parcels which have received interested and could bring in more than \$7 million.

Many actions have been taken by this Mayor and Council to deal with the budgetary situation. In Ward 5, I have reduced the staff of the Council office from six people (when my predecessor was in office), to now three, reducing my office's expenditures by more than \$60,000.

To date, this Mayor and Council has cut a lot out of the budget, in expenditures as well as employment positions and continues to look for ways in cutting the budget.

However, cutting is only part of the picture of recovery. We must, in turn, stimulate the economic engine to make the City move again. Your Mayor and Council have done a lot in this regard and hopefully, we are working towards the "light at the end of the tunnel."

Thank You,



Richard G. Fimbres
Your current Vice Mayor and Council member
Ward 5

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